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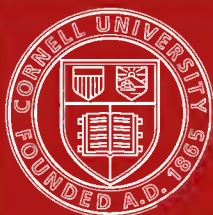
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JOHANNES SCOTUS.

SOME FACTS AND PROBABILITIES
RELATING TO THE HISTORY

OF

JOHANNES SCOTUS

SURNAMED DUNS

AND

CONCERNING THE GENUINENESS OF THE

SPAGNOLETTO PORTRAIT

BELONGING TO THE GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
OF THE UNITED STATES

BY

GEORGE SHEA

CAMBRIDGE

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"If in what I have written any one find matters other than what is true, let him not blame me for cleaving to what is the true rule of historic narrative, and simply gathering from common fame the facts I have resolved to record." — BEDE'S *Preface to his Ecclesiastical History*.

JOHANNES SCOTUS.

IN writing the name of John Scotus I omit the famous addition by which he is popularly known ; chiefly because it is not in the inscription on the tomb where his body lies, within the Church of the Minor Friars, in Cologne ; and also because it is probably a descriptive attribute simply indicating his birthplace. Such an indication was common in his time ; as, indeed, throughout the Middle Ages, in Europe. We have specially significant instances in that of his greatest opponent, Thomas of Aquino, and in that of John Scotus, of the ninth century, surnamed Erigena, the Irish-born.¹ And so, perhaps, to distinctively mark the Scotus of the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries from the other great scholar-monk, the designation Duns was conveniently adopted. Duns, correctly so written, is, in fact, the name of a locality, not an epithet of personal quality ; and the word itself is English.² The village of Dunum, in Ireland, and of

¹ Milman's *Latin Chris.*, vol. iv. p. 185 ; Turner's *Anglo-Saxons*, vol. iii. p. 361.

² Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary*.

Dunse, Berwickshire, Scotland, each claim the credit of having been his birthplace. The wording of the inscription in the mural slab which formerly marked his grave, "Scotia me genuit," adds nothing for an intelligent decision of the contention. The term Scotia would, at that age, as in earlier ages and with truer historic accuracy, apply rather to Ireland than Caledonia.¹ It must, I think, be taken as declaring his descent from, and association and sympathy with, as it were the metropolitan Scotia, from which maternal source had proceeded into the Pictish country, Northumbria and the Angles-land, those communities of scholarly and monastic life amid which he was nurtured. It is most probable that he was born in or near to Dunstone, not far from Alnwick, in Northumberland, England, near the border of Scotland. A local tradition fixes the very spot — the village of Embleton, where stands Dunstanborough Castle, notable for its defense during the War of the Roses. At the close of one of Duns' manuscript volumes, and written in the same hand, a statement has been discovered that he was born at Dunstane; but this leaves the question where it has been, as to which Dunse, or Dunstone, or Dunum, — for each of these is only a form of the same name.

¹ "Whose inhabitants then bore the name of Scots." — Green's *Making of England*, p. 274.



IONA CATHEDRAL AND ST. MARTIN'S CROSS.

But he was not in his nature, nor in his bent of intellectual genius, nor habit of mind, an Anglican; no more than Erigena himself. He was of the fine, searching, metaphysical, poetic, Celtic spirit; and in his mental and religious development the matured offspring of the propaganda of scholar-monks created by the marvelous power, and perfected by the vigorous discipline, of such as Columba, Aidan, Bede, Alcuin, and the elder Scotus, — saints and philosophers, and soldiers of the Cross, who had, as Green relates more fully than other historians, brought “the Angles-land” under the enlightening and beneficent “sway of Christianity,” long before the result of the Synod of Whitby (A. D. 664)¹ determined them to undertake, in greater force, those mighty missionary labors which carried the Gospel to the heathen tribes of the Rhine, from the outlets of that river to the borders of the Lake of Constance, and thence beyond the Alps to the Plains of Lombardy, where Columbanus established at Bobbio that superb institution of religion and knowledge which “lighted the flame of science and learning,

¹ “The synod had no sooner broken up than [Bishop] Colman, followed by the whole of the Irish-born brethren and thirty of their English fellows, forsook the See of Aidan and sailed away from Hii.” — Green’s *Making of England*, pp. 313, 314. But St. Cuthbert remained at Lindisfarne after this protest and great secession, and became prior of the dwindled company of brethren. — Green’s *Hist. of the English People*, vol. i. pp. 313, 367.

and for a long time made it the torch of Northern Italy." The character of the intellectual-moral personality of the early Saxon kings, especially those of Northumbria, and its statesmen-priests and scholars, cannot be clearly seen, without being regarded in the light of that religious education which they received from the monastic institutions of Ireland, and from those which were, in later days, planted by them throughout the British Isles. For hence, and in successive ages came, illuminated by the genius of Christianity, such monarchs as Alfred of Northumbria, and such priests and philosophers and controversialists as Wilfrith and Erigena.¹ There is little to be found, and less that is trustworthy, in accessible books concerning these two eminently historical persons. In Green's History of the English People there is but slight mention of Duns Scotus and none of Erigena, and nothing of either in his Making of England; and in the latter-named work appears but the merest mention of Alfred of Northumbria. Hook, in his Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury, makes inexcusable errors about Duns Scotus. But Sharon Turner, in his History of the Anglo-Saxons, is perspicuous and correct, almost satisfactory; and each circumstance is verified by authentic citations. I shall make a place here — though the matter does

¹ Montalembert's *Monks of the West*, vol. iii. etc.

not appear strictly to belong to my theme — for some memorials relating to them.

Northumbria during this epoch was prolific of great men and great deeds. The two personages whom I have mentioned chiefly interest us. Alfred of Northumbria, surnamed “the Wise,” was the express product of the religion, learning, and statesmanship of the time; John Scotus, surnamed “Erigena,” was the product, though in later times, but belonging to the same epoch, of its love of philosophy, polemic theology, and daring intellectual speculation. The region of Alfred’s labors was at home in his native realm: Erigena, as did Alcuin his fellow-student, found congenial arenas at the Court of France, amid its splendor and its ambitious schemes. And Alfred should prolong our attention, for he is regarded by some authors as the model upon which Alfred the Great formed his character.

ALFRED, the eldest son of King Oswiu, is spoken of by Sharon Turner, as “the precursor of the greater sovereign, his namesake; but the similarity of his intellectual taste and temper with the pursuits and sentiments of the celebrated Alfred of Wessex, makes his character still more interesting. As Alfred of Northumbria appears in Bede as the first literary king among the Anglo-Saxons, we may reasonably suppose that his

example and reputation had no small influence in suggesting the love of study, and arousing the emulation of the son of Ethelwulf." He was educated by the famous Wilfrith: afterwards known as Boniface, the Apostle of Friesland. In the second year of his reign Alfred remunerated his teacher by a bishopric. Learned ecclesiasts "from Ireland had given to his father and country what intellectual information they had acquired. He devoted himself to piety and literature, and voluntarily retired into Ireland, that he might pursue his unambitious studies. For fifteen years he enjoyed a life of philosophic tranquillity and improvement. He exhibited to the world this example of contented privacy till the death of Ecgfrid, his younger brother, raised him to the throne without a crime. . . . He reigned over the province, which his knowledge enlightened and his virtues cherished, for nineteen years." Alcuin describes him thus: "*Qui sacris fuerat studiis imbutus ab annis ætatis primæ, valido sermone sophista acer et ingenio, idem rex simul atque magister.*"¹

JOHANNES ERIGENA was a native of Ireland; his education was begun in his native land, and "nourished" amid the monastic life of Northumbria; a disciple of the Venerable Bede at Yarrow;

¹ *De Pont.* 718.

and towards the closing years of his career, after his return from the French Court, one of the literary companions of Alfred the Great, "of Wessex." He was distinguished by the acumen of his intellect and by the extensiveness of his acquirements. He "was a philosopher of a singularly subtle mind ; men wondered at this subtlety, which was so high above the general train of popular notions as to command universal reverence rather than suspicion. But he had not only broken the bonds of Latin Christianity, he went almost beyond the bounds of Christianity itself." Erigena "alarmed the Church" . . . by appealing "to a new power above Catholic authority, — human reason." "Perhaps the only fact which may be considered certain as to the early [period of his studies] is, that he must have commenced at least this train of philosophic thought [the supremacy of reason bringing all theological questions to the test of dialectic reasoning] in some one of the monastic schools of Ireland or of the Scottish islands. In some secluded monastery, among those last retreats of knowledge which had escaped the Scandinavian invasions, he imbibed that passion for knowledge which made him an acceptable guest at Paris, the partner of the table and even of the bed of Charles the Bald." Throughout wild and turbulent times "Erigena lived . . . resolutely detached from secular affairs, not in

monastic, but in intellectual, seclusion." He was a prolific author of original works; he was well skilled in Greek literature, and a translator therefrom into English of philosophical and theological treatises, the "curious and rich mysteries" of which suited his genius. Some of these were done at the request of the king, who was a famous patron of letters during that era. Erigena was an inmate of the palace and in great favor with that monarch. Alfred on his way home from his first visit to Rome (in the summer of A. D. 856) again visited the French court. Erigena was then with the court at Compiègne; and, as he was in fact at that time head of the school of the palace, Alfred must have become known to him. It was in that school-room Alfred first saw Judith, the king's daughter—she who afterwards became his step-mother. On Charles's death (near Mont Cenis, A. D. 877), Erigena, on the invitation of Alfred, returned to England. This is probably the veritable story; but Dean Milman says that "the general denunciation of the Church and of Pope Nicholas I. obliged him to fly to England," and that he took "refuge in Alfred's new University of Oxford." Other writers say that in all probability he never left France, and ascribe the date of his death as occurring in Paris about the time when his royal friend and patron died. He is often thus confused, especially by French writ-

ers, with Duns Scotus, who died while in the service of the French court; and, in like manner, Erigena is again confused by English writers with John, the "Old Saxon," who had been brought by Alfred the Great from the Abbey of Corley, and who, for a time, ruled the monastery and school at Athelney. That Asser does not name Erigena in his account of the friends and scholars whom Alfred gathered around his court from France and other parts is not to be slightly passed over.¹ Still, history places Erigena at Malmesbury, Ethelinge, and Oxford; with certainty at the first two, and it is, in my relation of historical evidences, more advisable to adhere to the ancient and respected authority and the accepted tradition. Alfred acknowledged and rewarded his ability and genius by putting him over the new monastery at Ethelinge. There he died by violence. So much appears certain. According to Asser he was assassinated, while alone and engaged in midnight devotion before the altar, by two lads who were under his educational direction, and who were suborned to the act by jealous monks.²

¹ Asser, the Welsh monk, author of the *Life of Alfred*: his friend and counselor, and afterwards bishop to his own countrymen in Cornwall.

² Turner's *Anglo-Saxons*, vol. iii. pp. 361-365; Milman's *Latin Chris.*, vol. iv. pp. 184-189.

It was at the close of the Roman governance over Britain, that settlers from the north of Ireland (whose inhabitants then bore the name of Scots) crossed over the strait of sea between Ulster and Cantyre, and founded the kingdom of Dalriada around Lake Linnhe. This small kingdom long rested in obscurity; yet silently concentrating its inherent strength and holding its integrity against the Picts, who surrounded it on the north and the east. Towards the end of the sixth century it rapidly grew into enlarged and vigorous life. The landing of Columba in the isle of Hii, off the Pictish coast (A. D. 563), and establishing Iona for the propagation of the Faith throughout North Britain and the parts accessible to missionary efforts in Anglia, gave Dalriada an important impulse and support. Aidan's consecration to the see of Lindisfarne (A. D. 597) was of almost equal consequence. These two centres of education are greatest among the primal facts of British history; for by them was first preached in our mother tongue the Gospel to the Saxon people,¹ and by their pupils the "Making of Eng-

¹ King Edwin, of Northumbria, who in exile had learned the Celtic tongue, and, also, kings Oswald and Oswiu, sat at the bishop's feet, interpreting to the wondering hearers: and from Iona, Lindisfarne, and Melrose, Aidan, Cuthbert, Colman, and their brethren, soon familiar with the Saxon speech, preached the Gospel in every part of the Northumbrian kingdom.—Milman's *Latin Chris.*, vol. ii. p. 191; Green's *Hist. English People*, vol. i. p. 47.



LINDISFARNE PRIORY.

land" was accomplished before the end of the seventh century.¹ These holy isles should inspire a feeling of veneration in the hearts of all true members of the Church in the United States; for, from them, in direct and unbroken progression, flowed that living stream which bore the validity of episcopal order to America through the consecration of Samuel Seabury, on Sunday, November 14, 1784, at Longeau, Aberdeen, Scotland, by North-British bishops, who, in their concordat, describe themselves as of "the Catholic remainder of the ancient Church of Scotland."²

The apostolical labors of Columba, of Aidan, of Bede, of Cuthbert, the kingly wisdom and patriotism of Edwin, of Oswald, of Oswiu, of Alfred, seemed to have annexed England to the Irish Church, when the monks of Lindisfarne, and of the new religious houses whose foundations followed that of Lindisfarne, "looked for their ecclesiastical tradition, not to Rome, but to Ireland, and quoted for their guidance the instructions, not of Gregory, but of Columba (A. D. 607—

¹ Green's *Making of England*, p. 174; in Palgrave's *Anglo-Saxons*, p. 70, it is declared that "to the successors of the Anglo-Saxon prelates we mainly owe the preservation of the forms and spirit of a free government, defended not by force, *but by law*; and the altar may be considered as the corner-stone of the ancient constitution of the realm."

² An autotype verisimilitude of this great historical convention is shown in the Library Hall of the General Theological Seminary, Chelsea Square, New York.

685). The real Metropolitan of the Church, as it existed in the north of England, was the Abbot of Iona.”¹ The tombs of the Saxon kings, within the monastic ground at Iona, attest the pious affection and reverence which those monarchs cherished for their more than *alma mater*; and to that place of burial was carried from the field of battle the body of King Ecgfrid (A. D. 684); for in a former time, “his father Oswiu had brought a bishop from there to instruct his people.” “The spell,” says the Venerable Bede, “which it [the Irish Church] cast over Northumbria was irresistible.” To cross the Irish Channel, whether for piety or for learning, became a fashion in the North; whilst fresh missionaries streamed over, in turn, to penetrate “into the wildest spots, where English heathendom found a hold.”²

That Era — comprehending many centuries — constitutes in its scope an epoch, the power of which has seldom abated and has never ceased to exert its masterly efficacy over the jurisprudence, the literature, the Church and the State of the English-speaking nations.

Within those national, religious, and philosophic educational influences, — still a living and

¹ Green's *History of the English People*, vol. i. p. 64.

² Bede's *Hist. Eccl.*, vol. i. p. 1; vol. iii. p. 7; vol. iv. pp. 3, 4; vol. ix. p. 10.



TOMBS OF THE KINGS, IONA.

abiding spiritual and intellectual force, — the heart and mind of JOHN SCOTUS, “of Dunstone,” was instructed, educated, and matured. And so it is, that what I have just premised appears to me to bear upon the general theme of this essay: for the moral and the religious intellectuality of men take their health, strength, disposition, and complexion as much from the atmosphere in which they are cultured as by the root from which they have sprung.

Trustworthy tradition relates that the aptitude of John Scotus, of Dunstone, for the kind of intellectual, philosophic, and moral attainments which distinguished him in his career, was observed at an early age; and that, while a lad, he was received by the brethren of the Franciscan order at its monastery in Newcastle-on-Tyne; not far from which town lies the district of Dunstone. It is conceded by those who have written on the subject that he completed his scientific, theological, and philosophical courses of study at Merton College, Oxford; though the inscription on the former tomb stated “*Gallia me docuit.*” He was made a Fellow of Merton: for the number and variety of his scholarly attainments and his proficiency in each, especially in the science of numbers, gained him wide note and admiration. Upon a vacancy occurring, by the removal to Paris of his master, William Varron (A. D. 1301),

Scotus was appointed to the chair of Philosophy. Thomas of London had, also, wandered to Paris from his own school at Merton. That Scotus' lectures at Oxford attracted immense gatherings of students is amply proved by contemporaneous history, and seem wonderful even after we make allowance for the exaggeration of those chroniclers. His reputation rose into high esteem among the learned men of the land. At that time, as ever throughout his striking career, especially after he went to France, exaggerations and fictions of almost miraculous achievements beset his proper fame, casting conjecture and discredit upon his truly marvelous labors.

It is one of those fanciful legends which is the subject of the famous portrait-picture by José Ribera called *Lo Spagnoletto* — concerning which painting I shall hereafter speak.

The merits of Duns Scotus — for I shall now begin to name him by that distinguishing and peculiar designation — became known and esteemed in foreign lands. But the Franciscan school at Oxford, to which he belonged, had, under the inspiration of Grosteste, Bishop of Lincoln (b. A. D. 1214 — d. A. D. 1292), attained a reputation throughout Christendom. Lyons, Paris, and Cologne borrowed from it their professors. It was owing to its influence that Oxford rose to a position hardly less eminent than that of Paris itself.

Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham,¹ its scholars, were among the most profound and original of the schoolmen. The fame of that school and of Scotus' own great talents soon led to his being called (about A. D. 1304) to Paris. There Ockham was first his pupil and then his successful rival. Duns Scotus soon after received from that University the doctor's degree. So rapid was his advance that in his first year at the University he was appointed Regent of its Theological School. As Alfred the Great was inspired by the example of his wise and pious prototype of Northumbria, so it would appear that our Duns was inflamed by the brilliant and daring example of Erigena. The statement "Gallia me docuit" has, in this connection, a meaning imparted to it: for though the mind of Duns was "bent" by the monks of Newcastle, and "inclined" at Oxford, it was at Paris, amid the congregate learning, eloquence, and noble ranks which attended the court and served and adorned its colleges and seminaries, that the genius of Duns received the instruction which gives significance to the boast that France "taught" him. Erigena had said, before Duns Scotus did, that Paris had "nourished" him. With little delay he broke into the ranks of polemical controversy. He

¹ Brewer's Preface to the *Monumenta Franciscana*, one of the Rolls Series; and Grosteste's *Letters*, in same series.

found there a world wherein his great learning, scientific knowledge, and philosophic subtilty could disport, as it were, in easy triumphs with even the famous masters who then were giving renown to France. The disputes between the adherents of the Franciscans, "Scotists," and of the Dominicans, "Thomists," gathered the followers of Duns Scotus and those of Aquinas into opposite and contending camps; and those contentions make an era in the history of celebrated theological arguments. His notable proficiency in disquisition, and the acute quality of his intellectual penetration into abstruse subjects, — for which he showed an almost intuitive power, — brought to his name that epithet by which his genius and abilities are, and have ever since been, universally acknowledged, "Doctor Subtilis." "He could see consequents yet dormant in their principles," — I quote the phrase from Bishop South. On the margins of pages in a unique copy, which I met with in a friend's library, of Granger's History of England — I shall refer to the book again — some admiring reader has made notes, copied from other sources, relating to Duns Scotus; and, among many comments copied by him, is: "He was so consummate a philosopher that he could have been the discoverer of philosophy if it had not before existed. His knowledge of the *mysteries* of religion was so profound that it was rather intuitive certainty

than belief. He would have written more had he composed with less accuracy. Such was our immortal Scotus; the most ingenious, acute, and subtle of the sons of men."¹

The epithet "doctor subtilis" was, it appears to me, imputed by a popular sentiment, not merely to applaud his skill as the eminent antagonist of the great Dominican, Thomas Aquinas, the "angelic doctor," but rather to depict peculiar and rare dexterity for "finely woven," "precisely accurate," and insinuating power in any scholastic or theological disputation. The modern sarcophagus at the church of the Minor Friars perpetuates the epithet "Joannes Scotus, Sacræ Theologiæ, Doctor Subtilis."

Duns Scotus will be always recognized as an early, and in his time, the valiant and powerful asserter of the doctrine of the immaculate con-

¹ But there are diversities of opinion on this high esteem. The following is a compendious sentiment not uncommon concerning the "Duns" gift of nicely discriminating powers. The faculty in him, however, displayed itself not in verbal dexterity merely, but in keen mental penetration and discernment. One writer speaks of him as celebrated for his "versatility in detecting invisible distinctions, in multiplying hypotheses which differed from each other only in some verbal incidents, in twisting every thought and proposition as by an intellectual prism, in speculating upon themes above the reach of human knowledge, and in the multiplication of ingenious theories without proof to sustain them, or utility to recommend them"! It seems that this critic has caught somewhat of the discriminating spirit which he condemns.

ception. His was the sometime dominant intellect of the University of Paris; and that at a period when it was the "great school of Western Europe." Perhaps his most important literary works are the "Questions and Commentaries on Aristotle," and the "Sentences of Lombard." But these things require no exposition in this monographic essay.

Duns Scotus was not wholly a simple-minded, scholarly, humble, self-sacrificing, devout personage, like most of his fraternity, whose learning, artistic skill, piety, and intrepid charity, were the glory of that and of preceding times, and the light from which is still an illumination even unto this age. He displayed his family crest and arms, according to the pride of the higher classes. Nor did he keep himself retired from projects of political ambition favored by the court of France. At the moment of his death (A. D. 1308) he was engaged as chief in an embassy at Cologne. He was there to aid in establishing a university and in other affairs on behalf of his religious order. The mission embraced further objects, and probably those belonging to state-polity; wherefore on his arrival at Cologne he was received publicly and with much ceremony by the magistrates and nobility of the city. That the fatigue incurred by the usual ceremonies of such occasions, and the tumultuous hospitalities, unusual to him, of the

generous burghers exhausted fatally his strength, cannot be asseverated nor denied ; but he surely did not die, as a legend tells us, in a state of voluntary poverty, either of spirit or worldly negation ; nor from physical debility following a single and marvelous intellectual effort ; nor in cloistered retirement ; nor as an ordinary in the heroic holy life of the " Ord. F. F. Minor." While the city was jubilant over the presence of the great Franciscan, and while he was energetically occupied in the purposes of the mission and embassy, he fell dead, of apoplexy, the eighth day of November, A. D. 1308, and was buried, as I have already told, in the Church of the Minor Friars. If the guesses of some writers correctly ascertain the date of his birth as about A. D. 1265, then he died at an early age.

The fantastic legend of his death vanishes into thin air. Surely "the earth hath bubbles as the water has, and this was of them." But though a bubble, "of imagination all compact," it was one belonging to the devotion and simplicity of the period ; a fancy not to be regretted, for to its conception we owe the myth which inspired a great painter's pencil to delineate the features and individuality of the famous founder of the "Scotists" as we to-day behold him on the living canvas of Ribera.

The Church of the Minor Friars was one of

the most *suggestive* ecclesiastical edifices on the Continent of Europe. It is no longer, except in a lessened degree. Modern restoration has reached it. It is, happily, unaltered in its outward walls and supports; and the interior—its structural characteristics, its massive pillars, and its windows—is not changed in its original general lineal form. But the impressiveness of its former appearance—its sober-colored walls and pillared arches, “looking antiquity”—is gone; and in its stead, the whole of the chancel and nave are garish and tasteless, edged with gilt, and emblazoned in the gorgeous glories of the present German renaissance. When I was last (A. D. 1888) in Cologne I again revisited the church, and searched for the old plain slab of dark stone, which I first saw many years before in the nave. It was not to be found. Indeed, the person in attendance there—perhaps the “kuster”—had never heard of it. I recollect it, and the inscription, very distinctly. It bore no name, only the well-known traditional epitaph: *Scotia me genuit, Anglia me suscepit, Gallia me docuit, Colonia me tenet.* The new sarcophagus is erected behind the altar; and is similarly decorated in common with the surrounding restorations. The sacristy, with its grand, central massive pillar, yet remains, notwithstanding, in its original condition.

Eminent as the name of Duns Scotus was in his own and succeeding times, nothing relating to him has contributed more to preserve in later ages his unmatched fame than this "extraordinary" portrait by Lo Spagnoletto. Before the death of Duns Scotus, and afterwards, strange stories were told, and believed by the multitude, of miracles wrought by him in the cause of religion and learning; for the fertility of his mind and its fecundity in production were remarkable, even for that age, when the love of learning was a predominant passion in studious cloisters. These labors are evident from the manuscript volumes at Merton. In the library-rooms of that college lie buried in dust, silence, and obscurity, twelve massive volumes of the literary works in MSS. of Duns Scotus. "He wrote so many books," said one of his ancient and ardent admirers, "that one man is hardly able to read them, and no one man is able to understand them." Enthusiasm begat exaggeration, and exaggeration superstitious credulity; and among the "miracles" imputed to him was, that, upon a certain challenge, he engaged to "translate the whole of the Scriptures without tasting food." THIS IS THE SUBJECT OF THE PAINTING BY LO SPAGNOLETTA. Duns Scotus, continues this legend, "expired in finishing the last chapter of Revelations."

The interesting inquiry for us is, Where is the

original of that picture ? I believe it the one now owned by, and in possession of, our General Theological Seminary, and shown in its library, at Chelsea Square, New York. The reasons for this belief are :—

First: An original was painted by Ribera, surnamed *Lo Spagnoletto*. Of this no question has been made. History itself verifies the fact. The only question has been, and is, as to the original, — if neither of the three, — that at Windsor, that at the Bodleian, and that at Merton, — where is the original ? In Granger's History¹ an account of the original and of those copies is given ; but while Granger describes and designates the three copies, and the places where these severally are, he says nothing, and appears not able to say anything, about where the original is, or to assert that it is in existence, though he mentions that there was an original by *Lo Spagnoletto*.

Second: Before the *Spagnoletto* portrait in question came into the possession of Mr. John Chaundy, of Oxford, England, only those three were known to exist ; two of which, each at different times, were asserted to be the original. The third, which is in the library-room at Merton College, is a copy of a copy, and never was regarded as other than a copy. The Windsor picture was for some time regarded as a *Spagnoletto*, and

¹ Vol. i. p. 60.

sometime as the original; but the latter pretension is long since abandoned, and it is now thought not to be a work of that painter. The Bodleian is admitted to be a copy, and perhaps of the Windsor. It was painted in the reign of Charles II. by Ashfield, an English artist of good reputation.

Third: I was familiar, by many visits to Windsor and Oxford since 1859, with those three copies named by Granger. In the early part of last spring (1889), while in Oxford, I saw a painting in the rear of a shop wherein old engravings are for sale, and thought it might appear, on further scrutiny, to be the original, or a replica, of the Spagnoletto Duns Scotus. On closer examination I believed it to be the original by Lo Spagnoletto, and afterwards, by inquiry of Mr. John Chaundy, the proprietor of the place, who was quite aware of the probable genuineness of it, I learned enough, with what I knew before concerning the missing original, to agree with him.¹

¹ After the Seminary became possessed of the painting I desired more information as to the history of how it came into England and from what place; but I receive nothing further than that which Mr. Chaundy himself told me at the time of purchase. The following letter, dated Oxford, June 2, 1890, from E. M. Chaundy to me is pertinent: "In answer to your letter of May 25, I am sorry to have to tell you that my father, Mr. John Chaundy, about whose illness you knew before, passed away in January last. He had previous to the sale of the picture made every effort to find out the history of it, but was never successful in learning more than what

The reasons are many which convince as to this opinion,—but there are circumstances which appear to exclude any other conclusion. First: Three are known to be copies, and by other painters. Second: The existence of this Spagnoletto being discovered, it fills the only vacant place in Granger's history of the picture; as it is unquestionably an original painting, and as it answers the traditional description of the "extraordinary" portrait. Third: The painting is recognized by connoisseurs as a genuine Ribera. It is one of the best of his works.

As to the authenticity of the likeness, it is agreed that it must, in a sense, be accepted as traditional. It is a true portraiture nevertheless, and not a fancy nor a mere imagination. The features and expression are peculiarly and strongly individual. It is "the counterfeit pre-

he himself told you concerning it. I am sorry that I have no positive information to add to what you already know, but I am very glad to know that the picture is very much esteemed."

Mr. John Chaundy told me, that the picture had been placed with him by a "private gentleman" to sell; that it had been bought many years ago by an ancestor of that gentleman, who understood it had been brought into England from the South of France; and that it was believed by the family to be a genuine Spagnoletto, and the original of his Duns Scotus. He thought he verified this belief by referring me to the memoir of the painting in Granger. Mr. Chaundy was himself the owner at the time the Seminary acquired it. He appeared to cherish the painting, but ill-health required him to part with it.

sentment " of a real person, and of such a personage as Duns Scotus. It has none of the characteristics nor methods of treatment adopted by the master painters of that era in their ideal heads. The features are pronounced in Celtic physiognomy. Ribera was born in 1588, two hundred and eighty years after the death of Duns Scotus. We must, however, reflect that it would be remarkable if the personality of such a character as Duns Scotus, in an age when the limner's art was prevalent and of high merit, should not have been perpetuated in lines and colors less fading than those of memory. We have likenesses of men of less attractive individuality, and of less celebrity, which have come down to us from those and earlier times.¹ Tradition speaks of a portrait of Duns Scotus, which was in a chateau near Blois, in the days (A. D. 1409-1450) of Agnes Sorel. Let us, likewise, not omit to remember that Duns Scotus was united to a society of scholar-monks who were expert in the art of illuminating missals and of painting miniature-portraits in colors and in black outlines, on vellum, and who delighted to delineate notable men of their own times, and especially those belonging to their own immediate

¹ *Dictionary of Miniaturists, Illuminators, Calligraphers, and Copyists: from the Establishment of Christianity to the 18th Century*, 3 vols. Bernard Quaritch, London, 1890. *Life of Giorgio Giulio Clovio*, (London,) 1889.

religious fraternities. They were superior in skill to the miniature painters, book-illuminators, and calligraphers, and other pious art-devotees of later eras. The scholar-monks of Ireland — his own associates in missionary labors in France and on the Rhine — still preserved the genius of their predecessors for those fine arts, and were themselves masters of renown.¹ The three copies on

¹ Westwood's *Fac-Similes of Miniatures and Ornaments of Anglo-Saxon and Irish MSS.* Folio: London, 1868. Humphrey's and Jones' *Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages, from the 14th to 17th Centuries.* Folio, London, 1849.

The art of illuminating books, and embellishing them with miniature portraits, in colors or in mere black outlines, was at its highest skill during those times. The social and political revolutions of the Latin Empire were debarring the pictorial art from a comparative merit, and it sought and found a new home and encouragement in the less disturbed tranquillity of Western Europe: and a new field opened there creating distinctive schools of such pictorial embellishment. The spread of the art of illumination in Ireland and in the north of England was due to the establishment of Christianity, and to the numerous monastic institutions, of which those of Columba and of Aidan were the most renowned. The unique Anglo-Irish schools — of which fine examples are in the libraries of Dublin, Lambeth, Oxford, and London — flourished from the sixth to the fourteenth century; and, contemporaneously, that of the Anglo-Saxon, and on the Continent that of the Charlemagne school; each showing distinctive features. The monasteries in the British Isles and in France, Belgium, and other places on the Continent, kept up, regularly, departments, including staffs of illuminators, outliners, copyists, and binders, — each detail an object of art. The emigration and constant intercourse between the religious orders affected the progress and history of art MSS.; for the early missionaries in their travels carried their devotional and service books with them; and evidences of this are found in Paris, Vienna,

vellum of the Four Gospels, written for, or in the possession of, Maelbrigid MacDurnan, the Abbot

St. Gall, Bobbio in Italy, and other places to which they resorted in their learned and pious missions. French and Flemish illuminations may be said to have arisen greatly from such communications by Great Britain with those countries; and the improvements introduced by the Van Eycks influenced the illuminists and miniature makers of France and of England. The most significant specimens, for our purpose, are to be found abundantly among the illuminated MSS. books at the British Museum. Six have a special interest, not only as illustrating the immediate subject under review, but for their artistic and historic value: 1. The Exposition by Smaragous of the Rule of St. Benedict — a full-page miniature of St. Dunstan, showing him working at illuminating a page of a vellum book. It is the product of English art near the end of the twelfth century. 2. Charter of Foundation of New Minster at Winchester, by King Edgar, A.D. 966, with a page filled with bright, clear, definite miniatures, manifestly portraits; one of the king himself. This is likewise by an English artist. 3. Paraphrase in Anglo-Saxon of the Pentateuch and Book of Joshua, by Ælfric, Archbishop of Canterbury (died A. D. 1006). The miniatures are most delicately lined and beautifully tinted, and the faces and expressions show natural portraiture. The same face appears several times, and is of a royal personage. 3. The finest in dark outline are those in the Life of St. Guthlac, of Croyland — a series of characteristic drawings, in ink, slightly tinted. It is, likewise, an English work, and of a late part of the twelfth century. 4. Poems in Latin, by Convevole da Prato, the tutor of Petrarch, written for Robert of Anjou (A.D. 1334-1342). There are twenty-five, each an unmistakable portraiture, in different costumes, but of the same period. It is like similar productions by French and Flemish monks, of that and the preceding century. 5. The richest illuminated pages in existence are, it is likely, those of the Epistle of Philippe de Mezières for peace and friendship between Charles VI. of France and Richard II. of England. It is of the fourteenth century. Each figure a portrait — no facial expression, or figure, or costume alike, and each a costume of the time. The

of Derry and the Bishop of Armagh, who died about A. D. 927, are of a date as early as the ninth century. No finer or more beautiful specimens of calligraphy and elaborate illumination exist. One copy is esteemed among the chief literary treasures of the Lambeth Palace Library;¹ another is at St. Gall, Switzerland, among the books which were used by the great missionary and scholar; and the third is in the library of Trinity College, Dublin.

It cannot be doubted that Lo Spagnoletto might easily have furnished himself with ample

likeness of Richard is strikingly like the large painting of that monarch which is on the right side of the chancel in Westminster Abbey. 6. But that which has a unique interest for the scholar and lover of art are the miniatures in the *Divina Commedia*. They are by Italian artists of the fourteenth century. On page 109, and again on 110, are likenesses of Dante; that on page 110 is particularly valuable, for there we see, fresh as if the work were finished but yesterday, his lineaments and the very expression which Giotto has preserved in the fresco of the ancient chapel of the Palace of the Podestà, at Florence. There the face, in profile, of Dante, looks to the left—in these two miniatures it is reversed: but they are evidently copied “in little” and by no mean hand, from that original. That famous portraiture—now irrecoverably dimmed and overlaid by attempts to restore—might be regained in some skillful reproduction from these unique illuminations.

The works of none of those schools exhibit the stiff nor grotesque character of the Byzantine. They are entirely natural in form and lifelike in expressiveness.

¹ I have seen the original manuscript note upon the fly-leaf which records, “This book was a present from King Athelstan to the city of Canterbury.”—Kershaw’s *Art Treasures of Lambeth*, pp. 11, 27-30.

authentic materials for his genius to work from ; rich beyond the requirement of such an artist to create a vivid, speaking, characteristic, and natural presentment of a subject to which his genius was peculiarly sensitive.

And this ends all that appears to me pertinent to be said on the theme of this monograph.

205 WEST FORTY-SECOND STREET,
NEW YORK, *October 7, 1890.*

